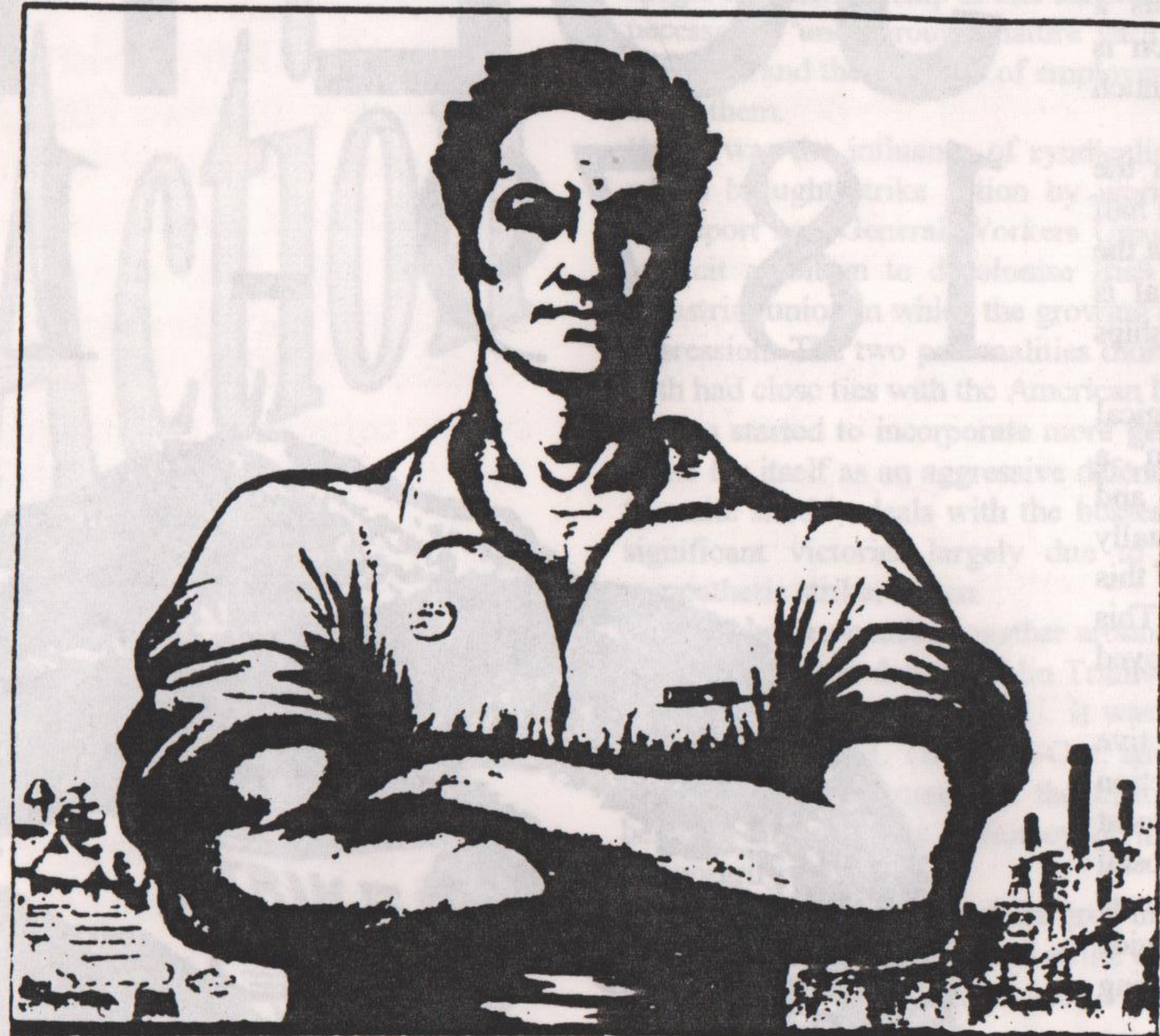


# THE REBEL WORKER



But the class conscious worker is different. He has discarded the capitalist prejudices and submissiveness to exploitation and lies. He has shed his middle-class faith in both politicians and the efficacy of political action. He knows what is wrong with the world and knows just what ought to be done to put an end to that wrong. He is no longer apathetic or indifferent to his class interests. He can no longer be fooled. He realises that he, as a member of the working-class, is rooted in industry and must unite and make common cause with all other workers in industry, and become an eager active fighter in the struggle to free the world from the age-long curse of parasitism. He knows what the word strike means and does not have to be told that it is his strongest and surest weapon.

Rebel workers who have been drilled, disciplined and hardened in the class struggle recognise instinctively that the strike is labour's natural weapon. They know what industrial power is and know how to use it. They have been forced to use it all their lives in little things and are willing to use it for bigger things - for everything. They have learned from experience that delegating their power into the hands of politicians is more likely to result in disappointment and betrayal than it is to profit themselves. They have learned that even in their unions they must have real democracy in order to keep their officials straight. In the class war they are convinced that the strike is the thing.

From 'The General Strike for Industrial Freedom', IWW pamphlet, first ed. 1933.

# ORGANISE!

THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

Vol: 2. Issue: 4. Winter '95/'96. 60p

## Direct Action GETS THE GOODS



### Is Our Best Defence

#### In This Issue -

- Peace, Xmas Lights and American Platitudes
- Alliances for Progress?
- Bloody Sunday 24 Years
- Gun Running for the Peace Process
- Capitalism - The Real Crime Against Society
- Fight Student Poverty
- Fight the Cut-Backs.
- Direct Action - Strike Action

**Stop  
the  
Cutbacks!  
Defend  
Our  
Hospitals**

see report inside



# WELCOME

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy new year, and welcome to the second edition of 'Organise!' to appear in magazine format - and more or less on time too!

Please write and let us know what you think of the mag and of course feel free to contribute articles, ideas and information for future issues.

## APPEAL

And now for the important bit! As we have said before donations are essential - we are continually in need of stamps, graphics, articles, news, letters, etc;. But cash donations are also urgently required if we are to continue, and continue to improve, production of 'Organise!'.

As we have also said before 'Organise!' is produced by an Anarcho-Syndicalist group of the same name, our members are ordinary working class people, employed and unemployed, from both 'sides' of our community. As such we are, as many of you will all no doubt be aware, skint at the best of times. So come on, if you like what you're reading, dig deep.

Please rush all donations to us at the P.O. Box address below and make them payable to 'Organise!'.

To all those who have already sent donations goes a big thankyou - you know who they are.

## MEMBERSHIP

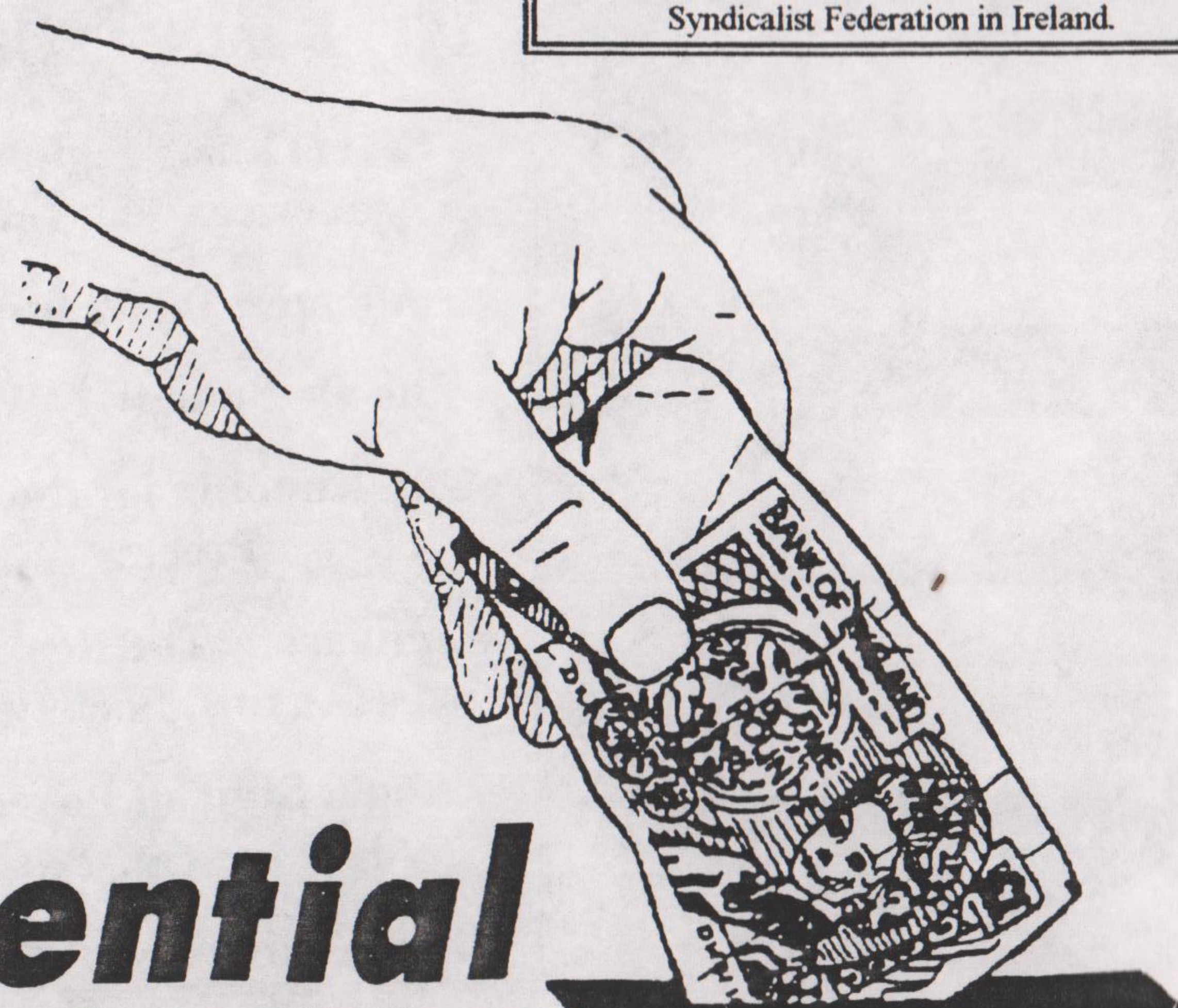
'Organise!' are a membership organisation, so if you agree with what we stand for we would suggest you get in touch with a view to joining.

Although our membership is at present limited to the north of Ireland we are dedicated to the creation of an all Ireland Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation as part of the international Anarcho-Syndicalist movement organised in the International Workers Association.

If you are sick of the crap that surrounds us; sectarian politics, the empty rhetoric offered up by much of the 'left', then help us build such a movement. One that is under the direct control of its membership and fights for the creation of a society ran on the basis of need not the profits of a few - without capitalist parasites, politicians or the need for any state.

**ORGANISE! the Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism,  
P.O. Box 505, Belfast, BT11 9EE.**

# Donations aren't just helpful



# They're Essential



## Aims and Principles

1. Organise! is a working class organisation.
2. We aim to create a free and classless society. We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery and replace them with workers control of both production and distribution for 'Need not Profit'.
3. We believe that only the working class can change society from the present system of chaos and inequality to a society based on co-operation, mutual aid and equality. This change must be achieved by the conscious participation of the workers themselves. We oppose all those who would set themselves up as 'new leaders'.
4. The only way to achieve this revolutionary change is by the formation of an independent workers organisation, the 'Anarcho-Syndicalist Union', within industry and the community, in federation with others in the same industries and localities, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies.
5. The Anarcho-Syndicalist Union is one controlled by the workers themselves, it is opposed to the sectionalism of traditional trade unionism and is open to membership of those outside and inside industry, it will unite not divide the working class. Any and all delegates will be subject to immediate recall to that membership.
6. The class struggle is world-wide and must recognise no artificial borders or boundaries. We must fight all attempts by capitalism to divide our class by setting worker against worker, employed against unemployed, man against woman and protestant against catholic.
7. The armies and police of this and all states do not serve to protect us, they exist as the oppressive arm of the state.
8. At present Organise! is a propaganda group. It is the role of Organise! to support workers in struggle, expose the weakness of traditional trade unionism and to work for the creation of an Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation in Ireland.

# Peace, Christmas lights and American Platitudes

He came, he saw, he conquered... and turned on Belfasts Christmas tree lights. I am of course talking about that Dollar God of the Free West himself, Bill Clinton. When he jetted over to our 'wee province', I don't think that anyone was prepared for the stomach churning P.R. slush that was to follow in his wake. Our T.V.'s were flooded with meaningless platitudes about 'peace', 'reconciliation', and other anaemic buzz words. We were bombarded with images that should insult the intelligence of any working-class person. The wave of hysterical euphoria, irrational celebration and downright stupidity seemed to effect almost everyone in the North.

We **thrilled** as he visited Mackies and praised the workforce as an example of 'world-class engineering' while Shorts boss Roy McNulty looked on (presumably keeping to himself that his salary of £500,000 equals the combined salaries of 50 Mackies workers!).

We **gaped** as with a weak grin, and an even weaker handshake, he meandered aimlessly about the Falls and the Shankill, stopping only to patronise the odd shop assistant. Meanwhile CIA goons fed doughnuts to their new found RUC colleagues - on the Falls Road!

We **laughed** as he told us we were '...making a miracle'. Now we can sleep at night, secure in the knowledge that when someone goes out to work for £1.50 an hour ... THEY'RE MAKING A MIRACLE!!

The American 'feel good' factor was being used to full effect as a concert was arranged for Billy in Belfast, while he flew off to Derry to spread his bullshit far and wide. When he returned it seemed that everyone in Belfast had turned out to see him... or maybe it was in a desperate hope that the Power Rangers might turn up after all. The NIO publicity storm troopers obviously had a word with some of the performers - especially wee Van who played some of the songs from the hateful NIO 'peace ads'.

As Bill gave his speech, I realised that if I'd had a pound for every revolting cliché that he'd uttered I'd have a hell of a lot of cash... a bit like Bill himself I suppose.

Maybe Organise! are sounding like a bunch of party poopers; a group of begrudgers who aren't happy with **anything**. After all the people of the North have had enough grief to last them a lifetime - why should we attack the visit of Clinton?

The simple truth is that Clinton and others like him don't give a damn about Northern Ireland, except when someone mentions cheap labour or 'potential for development'. Clinton would have us believe that there is no ulterior motive for his visit except to 'stand with you as you take risks for peace'. But we didn't hear anything about 40 million odd Irish-American votes that he stands to cash in on, did we? Seeing as his domestic policy is the subject of

Wouldn't it be great  
if.....



.....someone  
shot the bastard next time!

continuous attack, it makes perfect political sense to come over here, shake a few hands and be seen to be taking an interest in our problems.

Clinton represents the most powerful and vicious State in the world. A State that gets its strength from the exploitation of its workers, a State that has funded and instigated repression of workers all over the world, a State that symbolises all that is rotten about capitalism. Clinton is a rich boss, a profit parasite, a vote-seeking liar (hang on aren't all politicians like this?).

The most galling thing about his visit was that it was welcomed by the vast majority of people. Everyone was quite happy to get caught up in the

razzmatazz and excitement. And why not? After all we've been treated to our glorious leaders having talks about talks about talks about talks for years. Clintons visit was a break in the monotony, a flash of glamour in an otherwise sterile political arena. But what we have to realise is that Clinton is just another capitalist lackey, a pretty important lackey but a lackey nonetheless. And like all such lackeys he doesn't give a shit about you, me or anyone else who is working class. One woman interviewed on the Shankill Road summed it up for me:

"I'm not happy to see him here, whats he going to do for us?"

I couldn't have said it better myself - and for my part I would have preferred to see the Power Rangers.



# Alliances for Progress?

On Saturday 18th of November the Belfast Trades Council held a seminar entitled 'Building Alliances for Progress'. The seminar was broke up into three sections, each dealing with the community, womens and trades union agendas. Much of the discussion centred on whether the current Trade Union movement should involve itself 'directly' in politics.

## Missing the Point

The choice confronting the working class in the north was presented as one between more of the same (lame excuses from the trade union leadership for inaction on all the issues facing workers) or the establishment of a 'socialist' Labour Party based on the unions, in our opinion completely misses the point. The establishment of a party based on the unions will contribute nothing to workers struggles. The problem lies not in what type of political party - more militant, 'socialist' or reformist - but in the very nature of political parties. Political parties represent an artificial divide between economic and political struggles. All economic struggles are by their very nature political.

## Conflict

The aim of political parties is to gain power in a society based not on workers control and self government but on rulers and ruled. If in a political parties search for power the interests of the workers comes into conflict with the parties interest the party will always come first, just look at the track records of both the Irish and British Labour Parties. In the south their involvement in the coalition government has not led to any

improvements for the working class. We have all seen over the years the efforts by their British comrades at out-Torying the Tories in efforts to become the next government.

## Consensus Politics

On the other side of the coin the trades unions have proved totally inadequate at even protecting workers from the worst excesses of capitalism. After years of all out attacks on our class the Irish and British based unions still offer no strategies for effective resistance, based as they are on consensus politics - between the union bosses, employers and government - this isn't really surprising.

## Tragedy

The severe and prolonged economic crisis of the 1980's has shattered the social democratic premise that boom and bust in capitalism had given way to stability. The so called "golden era" of post-war boom with full employment has gone and is not likely to return, the capitalist class have returned to their traditional method of labour discipline - fear of mass unemployment to hold

down wages backed by state repression to manage social conflict. The tragedy for working class people is that forty years of class collaboration has left the unions defenceless.

## The Future

For us the recent Trades Council seminar showed the very real lack of debate, and the lack of willingness to confront the issues which effect working class people, which is typical of the trade union leadership and what passes for the 'left' in general. Workers in the north, and throughout Ireland clearly need a movement that will fight for their interests against those of the bosses and sectarian bigots. The truth of the matter is that the union leadership, nor any amount of politics are interested in or can ever hope to provide such an alternative. We must create it ourselves, as workers, and have direct control over it. The future, if there is to be one for our class, clearly does not lie with the social democratic trades unions - or with any Labour Party no matter how 'socialist' it may claim to be. It is time to set about the creation of a real fighting alternative.

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*The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism*

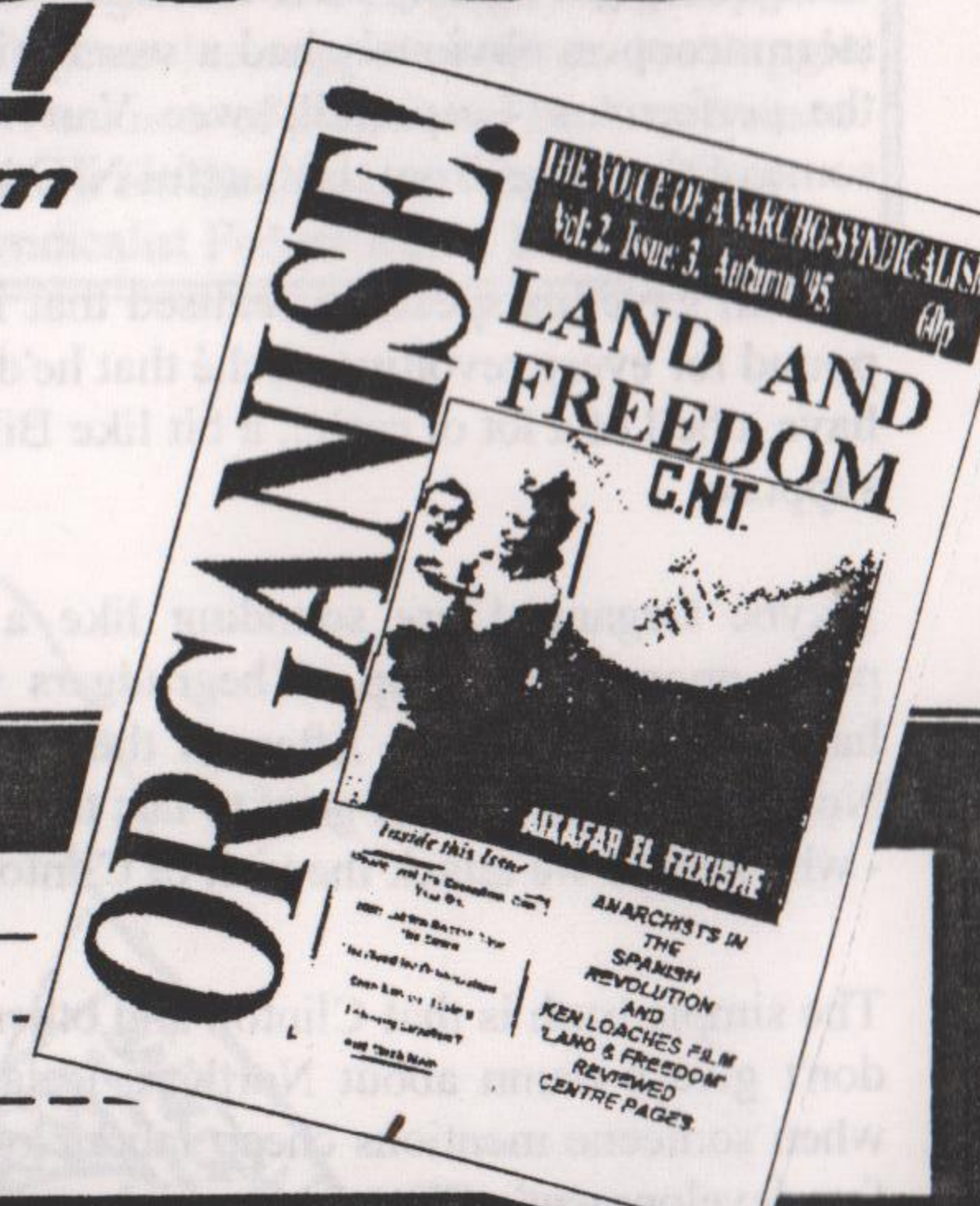
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## Gun Running for the Peace Process

Leading loyalist 'peace broker' Lindsay Robb seems to have got himself nicked for doing a bit of gun running on the side.

The PUP member, who took part in 'peace talks' with the NIO and government minister Micheal Ancram up at Stormont early last year was jailed for 10 years on the 20th of December for conspiring to run guns to the Ulster Volunteer Force.

Well it seems that Robb, who is after all from one of the parties with 'an insight' into the thinking of loyalist paramilitaries is playing the game both ways, or was 'til he got caught. Or perhaps he just couldn't help but take part in what is after all an old UVF tradition, going back to its original formation in 1913 in opposition to home rule. Even if his attempts were pathetic by comparison, the case involved only two pistols and a small amount of ammunition.

Among Robb's cohorts were Alexander Davidson, from Lurgan (who got a two year sentence one for each of the two bullets he was caught with at the Stranraer ferry terminal in July), John Johnston, from Falkirk (ten years for conspiracy and arms offences), Francis Hives, a Liverpoolian (five years for storing weapons), William McArthur, from Bonnybridge, near Strirling (eight years for weapons offences and 'conspiring by criminal means the purposes of the UVF'), and David White, from Airdrie (acquitted of conspiracy, five years for arms offences).

Noteworthy was the lack of condemnation of, or even comment on, the 'PUP/UVF' after this attempt at gun running. And this at a time when unionists are proclaiming the 'Sinn Fein/IRA' cease-fire over as more drug dealers are shot by 'Direct Action Against Drugs/IRA', and both they and the British government are insisting 'Sinn Fein/IRA' weapons are

decommissioned before 'talks' or whatever can begin.



Lindsay Robb, the man with an 'insight' into loyalist paramilitary thinking.

Robb's conviction must also cast doubt on the reliability of his evidence at the trial of Lurgan man Collie Duffy for killing a UDR soldier. Duffy was sentenced to life at the trial which had Robb as its key prosecution witness.

*The Herald* (a Glasgow paper), after the trial described The hapless loyalists as:

"An undistinguished rabble of losers and no hopers, seduced by vague notions of loyalty to the Queen and to the Union, who - fuelled by liquor and bigotry - have trooped off to jail, often for lengthy terms, for the sake of a handful of rusty revolvers and rifles."

Of course the PUP, as reiterated by party supremo David Ervine in a UTV news interview on Monday 8th January (following that parties latest trip to Stormont), feel that this conviction is unsafe. Robb has said he has been framed because he has knowledge that could 'embarass' the British government. His party have also expressed some surprise at what they call Sinn Feins 'new found faith' in British justice as regards the Robb case.

In the same interview, speaking of the recent murders carried out by Direct Action Against Drugs and rumours of a Protestant Action Force hit list of drugs dealers having been drawn up, Ervine condemned such activities and stated that the Progressive Unionist Party was opposed to Capital Punishment. Tell that to the families and friends of those who died during the 'troubles' at the hands of your UVF colleagues then Dave!

## Release Paul Norney - Free The Prisoners

Paul Norney is the north's longest serving republican prisoner, having spent 21 years in jail on a conviction for attempted murder.

Paul Norney was arrested at the age of 17, along with four men from the republic, after a shooting incident in a restaurant which left a cop slightly injured. All four were sentenced to life, although most lifers have been freed after serving half the time already done by Paul and his co-accused.

Paul, now 38, is waiting on the result of a hearing involving the three co-accused which could have a bearing on his own release. If the three, Steven Nordone, Noel Gibson and Sean Kinsella, are granted parole it should mean freedom for Norney and Brendan Dowds.

Dowds and Norney are still being victimised by the British Home Office. applications for parole have already been turned down for the two men who will not be able to reapply until next year. Paul Norney feels he is being held as an "act of revenge by the British Home Office".

It must be remembered that paramilitary prisoners in the north would not exist if it had not been for the political situation which existed here, it must also be remembered that these prisoners were instrumental in bringing about the republican and loyalist cease-fires. These prisoners should surely be released, and Organise! support demands for the release of these prisoners. We cannot however condone acts of blatant sectarianism and every effort must be made by the respective communities to ensure that rouge element do not attempt to engage in sectarian atrocities.

Much has been said in opposition to the release of prisoners, often using the 'victims' as the stick to batter them with. The fact of the matter is that 'victims' and 'villains' cannot be readily divided in a situation that has made victims out of members of our class across the board - prisoners included.



# Capitalism, The Real Crime Against Society

Crime is a topic that often raises controversy. In the papers and on the news we are told that crime has reached 'epidemic' levels. They make a show of being concerned and promise tight new controls in order to combat 'young hooligans' or 'dole fraud' or other so-called 'lower class' crimes. The government have brought in greater police powers, new state task forces and new legislation which seriously cracks down on individual freedoms. Examples range from the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act to the recent installation of security cameras (well more of them!) in Belfast's city centre (supposedly to protect shoppers from anti-social crime). The horror stories of elderly people being attacked and robbed by young offenders seem to bear out the need for State action, and in the final analysis it is suggested that crime is the preserve of the working-class.

## Companies regularly break the law and in doing so subject the working-class to even more attacks

The stereo-typical image of the criminal is of someone who is young, male and working-class. In order to examine crime and its real impact we have to step back and look elsewhere for crime that is not linked to the working-class. Would anyone conceive of bigger criminals who wear suits, are 'pillars of the community', work in 'respected' businesses? Would you imagine that corporate crime far exceeds street crime in terms of social damage? Would many suppose that the crimes of capitalist companies are responsible for the deaths of thousands of people?

A great emphasis is placed on the crimes that are easily identifiable (so-called 'blood on the street' crimes), yet as far as anarcho-syndicalists are concerned the real criminals are those who by way of their business practices endanger and exploit workers the world over.

Corporate crime rarely ends up on the crime statistics. Due to the complex and secretive nature of the activities involved they are difficult to identify let alone prosecute - and all this is supposing a willingness to prosecute even exists!

Companies regularly break the law and in doing so subject the working-class to even more attacks. Flagrant breaches of the Trades Description Act, negligent behaviour, tax evasion and fraud are all widespread in the business community. Fraud, from dodgy doorstep sales to multi-million pounds scandals far outstrip robberies and muggings in terms of financial impact. For example, in 1985, the total cost of fraud reported to fraud squads amounted to £2113 million - over twice the cost of theft, burglary and robbery in the same year. The BCCI bank took billions of pounds from small Third World investors and used it to finance the business deals of wealthy clients, losing most of the money in the process. The capitalist class would have us believe that their economic system is one of fair trade in which the individual can compete freely, but when we examine their business practices and methods they are less than scrupulous in their dealings. They are crooks in every sense of the word. Their crimes affect all of us. The crimes committed against consumers everyday bring the bosses millions in profit. Food fraud is a massive crime and is nearly undetectable. From use of

poor quality and BSE infected meat in beefburgers and other products, to the use of food colourings and preservatives, much of our food amounts to little more than a chemical cocktail.

## Every year thousands of workers are injured or killed in industrial accidents because of the illegal practices of the bosses

Quite often the products themselves are not the whole problem. How often have you bought a product and paid through the nose for the packaging? Selling strategies and advertising are causing untold amounts of financial hardship for working-class people. The most successful con on this level is probably the National Lottery itself, we are being sold worthless bits of cardboard on a neat advertising package and a slim promise of wealth.

Corporate crime doesn't stop there. Every year thousands of workers are injured and killed in industrial 'accidents' because of the illegal practices of the bosses. In 1993 it was estimated that 500 workers died and 18,000 were seriously injured in what were avoidable accidents at work. It is also estimated that two thirds of these accidents were due to direct breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act. Such corporate crime is rarely challenged.

Pollution resulting from illegal, and perfectly legal, dumping practices effect wildlife, land and invariably people. Pollution is rarely seen as a 'criminal' problem even when it is in breach of State laws. As with industrial crime it is rarely prosecuted.

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Corporate crime is far more dangerous and widespread than any form of street crime, and has just as direct an effect on the individual. The exploitation of the undeveloped world by capitalists cannot be described as anything other than criminal. Crime in relation to the Third World takes many forms:

**Product Dumping:** many products that are considered unsafe or inefficient in the West are exported and sold to the Third World. Depo-Provera, an injectable contraceptive banned in the USA because it caused malignant tumours in lab animals, was sold by the Upjohn Company in 70 countries and was widely used in US sponsored population control programmes. In addition the drug thalidomide was sold in the Third World years after it was discovered that it caused deformities in children.

**Environmental crime:** many companies use the Third World as a cheap and quick dumping ground for waste products and environmentally dangerous substances for the simple reason that little to no State restrictions exist regarding how much or in what way they must dump their waste. Any potential State opposition is simply bought off. Environmental destruction is also brought about by the rapacious exploitation of natural resources, examples of which include the massive deforestation of the Amazon rain forest and Shell Oil's activities in Nigeria.

**Financial crime:** companies move their production plants to regions such as the Third World, Eastern Europe and other areas where they are guaranteed cheap labour costs and a lack of government restrictions on employment practices. Workers are paid joke wages (some joke!) and have no rights what-so-ever. In one car factory in Africa, run by a German company, assembly line workers are paid \$80 a month - that's about £40.

All of these examples show how capitalist crime is a far greater, and far more destructive, phenomenon than so-called working-class crime. There exists a certain mindset, most notable from the companies themselves, that doesn't accept that these crimes are

crimes at all. There exists a reluctance to see the truth of corporate crime. Words like 'scam' or 'con' are used to describe these crimes rather than 'theft' or 'fraud'. Many 'accidents' are attributed to human error or disasters rather than laying them at the doorstep of the companies involved. It is usually left to some luckless worker or workers down the chain of command to carry the can

The reluctance to recognise corporate crime has very serious consequences for society. The focus is turned on the mugger or robber rather than on the rich parasites who are quite literally 'making a killing'. The obsession with street crime leads people to conclude that 'law and order' must prevail. They turn to cops, courts and prisons, or to paramilitaries as the solution to anti-social crime.



We have to see that street crime is the result of capitalism. When people have no money, no job, no future it is to be expected that some will turn to 'crime' in order to survive. We must however stress that anti-social crime against our own communities cannot be tolerated. Yet companies, from small businesses to multi-nationals are getting away with activities beside which such crime pales in comparison.

**The bosses have no qualms in attacking workers in order to make a quick profit. The real solution to crime lies in tackling the real criminals - the anti-social parasites who run this rotten capitalist system.**

## Fascist Threat to Student

*Fascists have again reared their heads in the North. A local law student, Paul Gupta, had spoken out against racism in early December. Some time later he received a letter containing razor blades from local Combat 18 boneheads. This was obviously an attempt to injure Gupta on opening the letter.*

It seems that Neo-Nazis have succeeded in gaining more publicity for their actions. Whilst we would obviously condemn this attack on Paul Gupta, we would disagree with him on how to tackle fascist thugs like Combat 18.

Gupta called for the immediate implementation of a race relations bill into Northern Ireland. As anarchists we are also anti-fascists but passing more legislation through Parliament won't solve the problem... do fascists particularly worry about whether they are breaking the law?

We have to show that their 'ideas' are redundant in our society. Racism is a divisive ideology. It separates the black worker from the white worker and in the end the only people who profit from racism are the bosses. To combat racism we have to take it on with both with ideas and action.

We have to show how different ethnic groups are all exploited by capitalism, how racism divides our struggles and only benefits the boss-class. At the same time we must be prepared to defend our communities and fellow workers from fascist threats and attacks. This means actual physical confrontation to drive fascists from our streets. If Nazis try to sell their papers in our areas we have to give them a subtle hint to move on.

Fascists in the North are in no real position to do much damage but we have to nip this problem in the bud. Anti-fascists and anarchists in Britain have been moving against Nazis for years and helping to drive them from the streets. We should take a lesson from their activities and confront fascism wherever we find it.



# Fight Student Poverty!

## Fight The Education Cut-Backs

It was a cold November day in 1988, and as a student at the then College of Business Studies Belfast, I was, with a large number of other students, outside Belfast City Hall protesting student poverty to chants of "Maggie, Maggie, Maggie - Out, Out, Out!"

On the 5th of November 1995, although 'Maggie' is now gone and the chants have changed, its very much the same story. And if the organisers of these protests in the Students Unions get their way it'll stay the same for the foreseeable future.

'Maggie' may well be gone, but the Tory parties attacks on the working-class have been carried on by her successor John Major's government. These attacks have had a devastating effect on education, and the standard of living of students throughout Britain and the north of Ireland.

Grant levels have fell by 20% in real terms over the past decade, and that's if you can even get a grant at all. This year's grant was cut by 8.5% for the second year in a row, and are to be cut by 30% over three years.

Students going to Further Education colleges cannot get grants, and if they're full time aren't entitled to any benefits. This and the recent removal by government of the Mature Students' Allowance shows clearly that the government are lying when they declare they are making education accessible for all.

Clearly only those with money, or who are prepared to get themselves into severe debt through the loans system, can manage to survive through higher education under the Tories. Students now have less of a grant than they did in 1985 - and in 1985 they were

entitled to dole and housing benefit in the summer.

The students union made much of the fact that this year it engaged in a 'Week of Action' in the runup to the demo, which according to 'the release' (the official newspaper of the Queens University Students Union) was for the Executive:

"...a combination of weeks of preparation and lobbying of MP's, councillors etc."

They claimed that the 'Week of Action' that would:

"...leave everyone in the country aware of the plight of students",

and that the union would increase its campaigning power by 500% over this year.

These are not tactics that will meet with any success. The government are intent at running down education for the working-class, and making University education the privilege of the wealthy. No amount of 'awareness campaigns', glossy PR exercises, lobbying of MP's or councillors is going to change that.

Students must link their struggle to end poverty and hardship with the struggles of all those employed in the education industry against redundancies, underfunding and other attacks. Solidarity must be built and **direct action** must become the principle strategy used in defence of our jobs and education. It is direct action, solidarity and determination which will deliver the best results. Only through occupations of colleges, strikes and sympathetic action can this struggle be won.

**The politicians and education bosses are organised and ruthless, so must we be.**

John, a Co. Down student has been attending University in Dublin since September '95. Here he talks to us about some of the financial difficulties he has experienced in that time.

O: When you were going to Dublin did you expect money problems?

J: I was expecting some money problems, but nothing like this... I got shit all of a grant. I've got nothing left so I'm going to have to get a loan out or something... For the Christmas term I got £120 and then I got another £120 for the next term. Its bloody awful. £120 doesn't even cover accommodation.

O: And your course is about three years?

J: No, four years.

O: So, if you're getting loans out for four years you're going to end up in quite a bit of debt.

J: Yeah, it just keeps mounting up.

O: What about your accommodation? Have you had enough money keep the heat going, etc.?

J: In a word, no! We're paying £135 to live in a house which is basically sub-standard... There's a fire downstairs... apart from that we have one gas heater in a bedroom for when it gets really cold... and the bathroom was fucked too. The sink was leaking and we had to get an occupant's father to come and fix it because no one down there wanted to know unless we had money.

We haven't enough hot water in the kitchen to even wash the dishes and its infested with vermin... The mice get into the clothes drawers, under beds and into my travelling bags. Its happened about five times now!

O: Have you said anything to the Landlord about this?

J: He said it wasn't his problem, even though he owns the property. He just doesn't give a shit!.. We tried to sort things out with him by withholding the rent, but he just kept calling 'round asking for his money. He called 'round drunk one night demanding his money and I just kept telling him to fix the place up. Eventually he called 'round one morning and told me that if we didn't pay the rent within one hour, he was going to change the locks. We couldn't afford that amount at the time as one of the occupants had done a legger...

He gave us to five o'clock, so we called 'round to the estate agents, who we pay the rent through, and found out that he had been 'round there earlier with a locksmith and was threatening to change the locks even before the deadline he had set us.

O: Were the Students Union any help?

J: Well, there's a welfare officer but he doesn't really get anything done, and the Students Union is shit. We were telling the officer that our bathroom door was broke so anybody in the bathroom could only get out through the window! It was like that for a week and a half. He just told us to keep paying the rent... The authorities at the University told us we were breaking the law while we were doing this kind of thing (not paying the rent).

O: Is yours an extraordinary situation or do most students get this kind of treatment? Do better off students seem to have this trouble or is it only working-class students who get these houses?

J: I'm afraid it seems to be us that gets this sort of shit. There are other richer students who don't have any problems with their houses.

O: So do you think this problems going to get any better or worse?

J: Its going to get worse. The working-class can hardly get to university unless they've been putting money away for years. If you get there you're going to be totally broke and you'll need at least one or two jobs on top of your studies.

# Fight The Closures!

The start of 1996 has seen, predictably, continued attacks on our health services. The latest report to be penned by Dr. James McKenna and his 'working party', *Seeking Balance*, will have devastating consequences in terms of services and jobs, across an already beleaguered health service. The balance being sought is obviously one of balancing the books as the realities of Trust status become all too obvious.

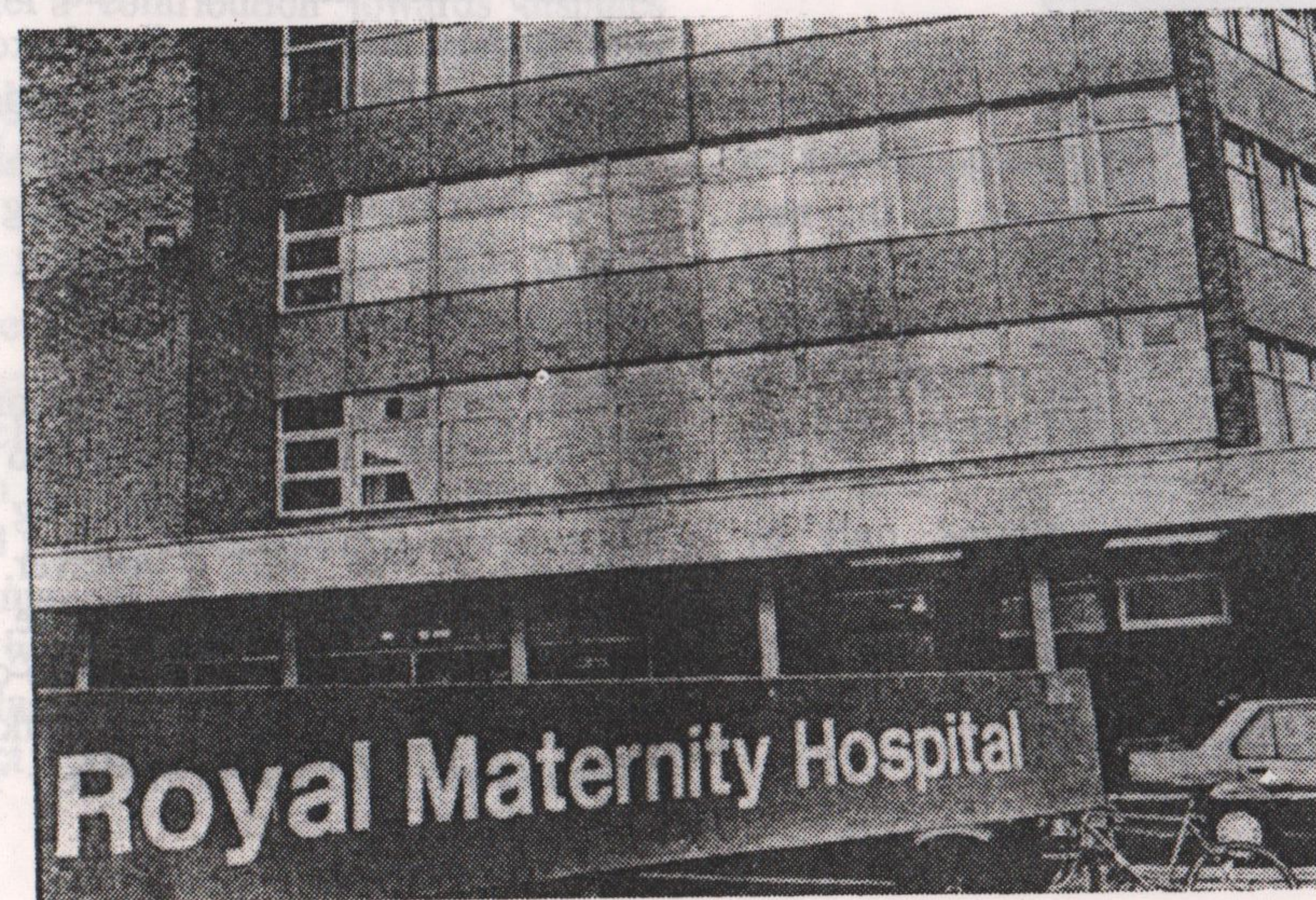
The report recommends the closure of the Royal Maternity Hospital in West Belfast, and the Jubilee at the Belfast City Hospital, to create one centralised maternity unit in the Tower Block of the City hospital. It also recommends the closure of the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department at the City, centralising A&E at the Royal. This would leave South Belfast with no A&E service at all

This is in addition to a previous report *A Singular Service* from McKenna and what's called the Acute Hospitals Reorganisation Report which was reported in the last issue of *Organise!*. If these attacks are unopposed, or if indeed opposition is restricted by Trades

Union bureaucrats, with their lunch-time half-hours of action etc, then the attacks will not stop here. Attention could well be turned to maternity and A&E at the Mater Hospital in North Belfast with yet more centralisation on the cards. Trust status has already had a devastating effect on many of our hospitals and yet it is set to be extended to the Western Health Board area.

As we said in our last issue the tactics pursued by the unions fit in nicely with the governments strategy of picking off one section of our health service at a time. We need a united campaign in regards to the latest proposals for the City and the Royal in Belfast, but we must ultimately go beyond this to mount a struggle against these attacks across the entire industry. Action must include the communities who depend on the health service as well as the workers.

Industrial action is obviously a necessity in this struggle and health workers should not be afraid to use it - if the unions try to obstruct it workers should tell them to fuck off! There can be no place for niceties and PR in the fight to keep our jobs and our health care!



## Desmond's and M&S Profiting From Child Labour?

On the 8th of January, a World in Action programme ruffled the feathers of some of our local bosses. The chairman of the North's biggest clothing company, Desmonds and Sons were said to be "profoundly distressed and dismayed" by allegations that children as young as ten were working in a Moroccan factory sub-contracted to them to make clothes for Marks and Spencer.

The World in Action film produced evidence of children working a 55 hour week for a grand total of £11.54.

It also turned out that they were producing clothes with 'made in the UK' labels. These clothes were on sale at Marks and Spencers stores until the 19th of December last year. Christmas shoppers both in the North and in Britain have been buying clothes which was probably the produce of child labour. This is not an isolated incident, companies regularly make use of slacker regulations in third world and east European countries to take advantage of cheap labour, including child labour, and thus increase profits. It is also something which happens closer to home in illegal sweat shops, often employing immigrant labour for a pittance. It makes 'good business sense' to keep costs down, i.e., pay the workers the minimum amount possible and if that means getting kids to do the work for just over a tanner a week, then so be it. When it comes to profits, businessmen, in fact the whole capitalist system, is devoid of morals.

## Dunnes Workers Sacked

Dunnes, instead of dishing out Christmas bonuses to staff, would rather give its workers the boot. Twenty-two Dunnes workers in Derry were sacked just five days before Christmas!

The sacked workers had their jobs filled by school children - no doubt at worse rates of pay! Their 50% increase on the previous years profits, bringing their total profits in the North up to a total of £13,657,000, just couldn't be enough for the money grabbing bastards. Happy Christmas? Not if you've just got the boot.



# ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST UNIONS

## Building a Fighting Alternative

'Organise!' is a group which is arguing for and working towards the creation of a new, revolutionary, union movement. In this article we look at exactly what we mean when we talk about a revolutionary union and propose ways in which we can start building the basis for such a movement.

A revolutionary, or Anarcho-Syndicalist union is one that is by necessity both political and economic, based within industry and our communities, and independent of all political parties and bureaucracies. A union movement that recognises that workers and bosses can never have common interests and which, while fighting on day to day issues such as pay and conditions knows that in order to win any decisive gains or victories from capitalism we must scrap it.

We want a workers movement that is confident and has the commitment to fight a class war with the same conviction as the bosses and government are doing now. A movement that is open to all working-class people, waged or unwaged, where Solidarity is not a mere slogan.

We want nothing but the best for our class, and that doesn't mean 'a fair day's wage for a fair day's work'. It means, in the short term, higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions. In fact we want what the middle classes take for granted. Why shouldn't we have decent homes for all? We bloody built them!

We want all that and more. But it must be at the expense of the bosses not other workers. Surely the last 15 years have shown that sitting back and watching while one section of workers have been attacked has got us nowhere and the bosses in the position they are in today.

In addition to the above such unions must be based on the principles of Direct Action and Direct Democracy. Direct Democracy means that all decisions are taken at the base, in the workplace by all members in that workplace. Direct Action means we take whatever action we feel best suited to achieving our aims - without relying on intermediaries or middlemen. The decisions lie with those effected by them and who are in the best position to decide on tactics which will bring success, not passed down from a distant, removed national executive.

### ...such unions must be based on the principles of Direct Action & Direct Democracy

Such a movement must also reject the trades sectionalism of the current union movement and build along industrial lines. Everyone in a given industry should be in the same union, be they the cleaner, typist, engineer, clerk, whatever - we must work to unite and not further divide our class.

#### Industrial Networks versus 'Super Unions'

In the face of a crisis which is both ideological and financial we have seen a rash of trade union amalgamations in recent years. The creation of the new 'super unions', such as UNISON and SIPTU would be a welcome development if it was prompted by a desire to increase the industrial strength of workers. The problem is that these amalgamations are inspired only by financial viability and the desire of union bureaucrats to maintain their well paid positions at the top of the union hierarchy.

Since 1979 union membership has fallen markedly resulting in financial difficulty for the unions - according to TUC figures, 10% of union dues goes straight to rich bankers to pay off union debts.

Coupled with these mergers the unions have moved away from any workplace base towards American style business unions. The unions increasingly see themselves as pressure groups who will be able to influence government by the use of professional negotiators elegantly expressing their views without the need for industrial action.

At the same time they have developed a vision of their membership as 'clients' which they provide with services such as credit cards, loans, insurance, mortgages etc.

The unions have become more and more divorced from the point of workers power - the workplace - and the move to 'super unions' will only increase that trend.

We need to begin the task of building a revolutionary union movement with its base in the workplace. As such Organise! advocate the setting up of networks in every industry to work towards this goal.

Initially these networks would provide information and support for workers in struggle. They must provide a framework for militant workers to begin to set their own agenda, their long term aim is of course the establishment of an anarcho-syndicalist union.

While rejecting the current unions as beyond reform, we will continue to work inside them to fight for working class interests. We will, however, be promoting workplace resistance, not standing in union elections on so-called 'radical' platforms. It is in workplace organisation, and not in the new 'super

unions' that the future of the working class lies.

### Given the Bankruptcy of Social Democracy the need for an Anarcho-Syndicalist alternative has never been more pressing

#### Locals - Building on a Community Basis

If class conflict on the shop floor is to become a real revolutionary challenge to capitalism it needs an organisational base to develop and spread it. Industrial networks are our answer to the inadequacy of trade unionism but without a wider solidarity movement they can only organise around specific industrial issues. To overcome this we also propose the building of the Anarcho-Syndicalist union on a local, or community, basis.

Through the setting up of Locals we can link industrial issues and networks with local issues and at the same time make solidarity a function of groups with a far broader class perspective and range of activities than a network can cover

The establishment of Locals or Solidarity Centres, bringing together like minded activists from any and no industries - uniting workers whether employed or unemployed in a geographical area, would allow us to make a contribution towards disputes and make sure that, whatever the outcome, the lessons and experience get put to good use.

We don't need single issue groups, however broad and participative, however broad and militant, but groups which will strive to tackle all issues from a working class perspective. We need a movement based as much on our communities as in the workplace, in this way, Anarcho-Syndicalism can give a class character to struggles which affect working class people.



The International Workers Association

These are not altogether new ideas, such a union movement has a history throughout much of the world. As the Trade Unions cave into, or comply with, the bosses; as they become more and more divorced from the day to day reality of those they represent i.e. working class people, we see Anarcho-Syndicalist, or Revolutionary Unions, as more necessary than ever.

As we have said such unions have a long tradition through-out the world. Most notably in Spain, during the Civil War of 1936-39, where the Anarcho-Syndicalist union the CNT provided the backbone and inspiration of a far reaching social revolution which was eventually crushed by the combined forces of fascism, capitalism and Stalinism.

After death of Franco the CNT reappeared as a major force in Spain, providing inspiration to anarcho-syndicalists around the world. Today anarcho-syndicalist organisations from propaganda groups to functioning unions are organised internationally through the International Workers Association.

Although not yet affiliated to the IWA 'Organise!' take inspiration from their achievements and struggles, and see ourselves as part of a world-wide struggle for workers control on the basis of the need of all - as opposed to a system based on greed.

Given the bankruptcy of social democracy the need for an Anarcho-Syndicalist alternative has never been more pressing! Help us build such an alternative.



The Barcelona Local of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Labour)



# Decommission The State

With the recent publishing of the Mitchell Report many were hoping that its findings, that decommissioning before all party talks was a non-starter, would herald a break in the impasse which is the 'peace process'. John Major's government have however found it much more attractive to pander to the whim of the Unionists in the House of Commons, who his greatly weakened government will come to rely on *more* heavily, and promise them elections to an unspecified body in the near future. As we go to print it looks less likely that the relevant political parties will be engaged in 'inclusive, round table negotiations' by the end of February.

The 'decommissioning' bugbear has been raised continuously by government and the Unionists as a precondition to talks. Major reiterated this precondition during Commons Question Time, 25th January '96, stating, 'The impediment to talks is the unwillingness of Sinn Fein/IRA to begin decommissioning their guns'. Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness stated, some time before the Mitchell Commission report, "other than deliberate stalling, there is no reason why these (inclusive negotiations) cannot commence on the date set by the two governments". He also stated that he and Gerry Adams had already informed Micheal Ancram in December 1995 that the issue of decommissioning could be resolved at that stage, "in one or two hours of discussions".

It looks as if more 'deliberate stalling' is what is in store. The recent actions of the British government, and of other local political 'leaders' must surely show us that they cannot secure the peace, if the proposition of peace is even of any real interest to them (well it doesn't look

as if it is does it?). A permanent end to sectarianism, both institutionalised and otherwise, is what members of our class crave and deserve. It is obvious that we must work to secure that goal ourselves.

Decommissioning, if it took place, would of course create an atmosphere of greater trust in our communities, which could only assist us in the task of building a genuinely revolutionary alternative for our class. An alternative which could seriously set about bridging the sectarian divide.

We do not say the above out of some misguided pacifism, but due to the desire that our class is not again plunged into sectarian warfare. We must also remember that the stated tactic of Republican armed struggle, to remove the British presence from the north of Ireland, has been proven ineffective.

If decommissioning of Loyalist and Republican arms was to come about, as part of an ongoing process, this must be as part of a broader demilitarisation of the north by the British government. The Mitchell report failed to address this crucial issue, saying nothing of the arms held by the state. Of course many have pointed out, correctly, that the IRA could reassemble an arms cache, of sufficient size to resume activity, with little effort. This however must be doubly true of the loyalists, armed often with British state assistance, and the British state itself - which must bear the ultimate responsibility of reintroducing the gun into Irish politics.

The British state has always been the most heavily armed 'player' in the troubles, with the British Army, the UDR/RIR and armed RUC in its camp - not forgetting manipulation of, and

collusion with loyalist paramilitaries. The British state, and the Stormont government from its inception until the implementation of direct rule, have always had a barrage of repressive legislation in their arsenal as well. The renewal, for another two years, of the Emergency Provisions Act on the 9th of January does not suggest that they are even contemplating anything which may encourage demilitarisation of the north at present or in the near future.

Even if the British government were to start a program of demilitarisation, and it is clear they must, we as workers must realise and always remember that the most dangerous 'terrorist' of all is the state and that as we progress along the road to social revolution we will, no doubt, be met with the full force of that terrorism. As such we should be prepared.

It is the British state that will be able to rearm with the greatest ease, for even if they disarmed the police force (whatever name it ends up with), disbanded the RIR even, and perhaps withdrew the Troops, we can be sure they will still have troops and arms aplenty to be moved in at a moments notice. The only real way to be sure of having a demilitarised state is to smash the state!



## Feed Your Head Anarcho-Syndicalist Bookservice

As knowledge of Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist ideas is somewhat scant here in Ireland 'Organise!' have recently extended our bookservice for those of you who may be interested in finding out more.

**God and the State**  
M. Bakunin  
£4.20

**The Anti-Climax**  
Alexander Berkman  
£0.45

**The Bolsheviks and Workers Control**  
Maurice Brinton  
£3.95

The truth about how the Bolshevik party crushed the 1917 Russian Revolution as they fought to establish themselves as controllers of a new state. How Lenin really did lead to Stalin, the crushing of independent workers organisation and the death of the revolution at the hands of the so-called 'professional revolutionaries'.

**Syndicalism**  
Tom Brown  
£3.95

Essential reading on the subject, originally written by the Tyneside docker and lifelong activist as a series of articles in Direct Action in the '40s and 50's.

**Lenin and Workers Control**  
Tom Brown  
£1.50

**Anarchism and the Black Revolution**  
Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin  
£5.95

**Spain: Social Revolution - Counter Revolution**  
£5.00

**Syndicalism in Myth and Reality**  
L. Gambone  
£1.00

A handy new pamphlet which counters many of the 'myths' about syndicalism peddled by academia and much of the left alike.

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Emma Golman  
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Kropotkin  
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IF WE'RE NOT ASKING  
FOR THE WHOLE WIDE  
WORLD, WHAT ARE WE  
ASKING FOR?



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E. Malatesta  
£0.20

**I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels**  
Albert Meltzer  
£12.95

Albert Meltzer's recently published autobiography is to be reviewed in the next issue.

**Anarchism Arguments for and Against**  
Albert Meltzer  
£0.80

An excellent short introduction to class struggle Anarchism. This essential and cheap little (but packed) pamphlet is essential reading for both newcomers and not so new comers to Anarchist ideology.

**The Kronstadt Uprising**  
Ida Mett  
£2.50

**Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism**  
R. Rucker  
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Valuable pamphlet on Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist ideas and practice from a man who dedicated his to its cause.

**The Tragedy of Spain**  
R. Rucker  
£1.20

**The May Days Barcelona 1937**  
Souchy et al  
£2.50

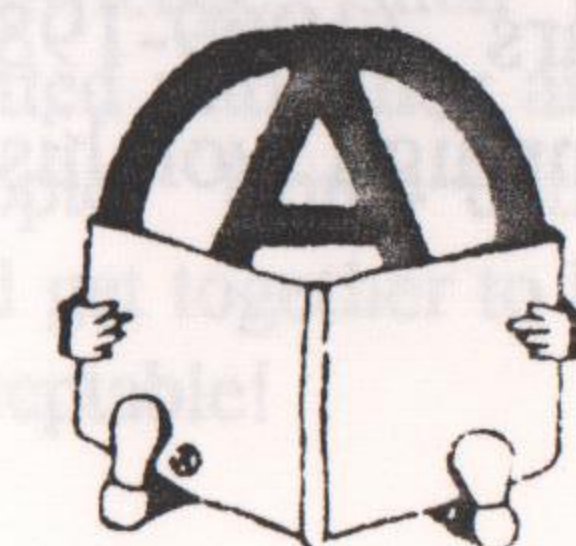
**Winning the Class War, an Anarcho-Syndicalist Strategy**  
DAM (now Solidarity Federation)  
£1.00

Valuable contribution to Anarcho-Syndicalist strategy, an attempt at tackling just how such unions can be built. Soon to be updated by the Solidarity Federation in light of their recent experiences in pursuing such a strategy.

**Anarcho-Syndicalism in Puerto Real**  
Solidarity Federation/El Presa  
£1.00

Tells the story of successful resistance against 'rationalisation' and how this developed into effective direct democracy and community control throughout the period of the strike. With the involvement of Spain's Anarcho-Syndicalist union, the CNT, the methods of organising and forms of action departed from those of the traditional unions - with dramatic consequences.

Send your order to 'Organise!' P.O. Box 505, Belfast, BT11 9EE.  
Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to 'Organise!', please add 10% to cover postage.





# Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin Speaks

Grassroots activist, former Black Panther and author of "Anarchism and the Black Revolution" will be speaking at The Place, Donegall Street Place, Belfast, on Sunday the 3rd March.

During the late 1960's Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin was a member of the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee in Eastern Tennessee, and later joined the Black Panther Party when the two groups merged in 1967-68. During that period, when the so-called "Black Power movement" began to exert itself in opposition to the reformist civil rights leadership in the Southern US and other parts of North America, he was involved in anti-Klan and civil rights activities in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Atlanta and other cities. When a so-called "Black Power" grand jury was convened in the Summer of '68 in Hamilton County, Tennessee to investigate SNCC and the Black Panther movement's role in "planning" disturbances in the city of Chattanooga, Kom'boa was summoned to testify before the grand jury on purported "gun-running" charges against him and other SNCC activists. He left the city when he learned that the cops and Klan wanted him dead if he would not testify.

The police and FBI had "shoot to kill" orders. The official story would be that Kom'boa was shot while resisting arrest. Kom'boa felt he had to get out of the country if he wanted to save his life. On February 25, 1969, he hijacked a plane to Cuba from Atlanta, Georgia but because of Cuba's fear of the Black struggle in North America, he was later arrested and deported to Czechoslovakia. American agents located him and tried to arrest him; he escaped, but ultimately was arrested, brought back to the US, and tried before a racist jury in a small town in Georgia and given two life prison terms. However, he didn't give up the struggle after he went to prison. He was a prisoner unionist, fighter for Black rights, a jailhouse lawyer, and one of the first Black radicals to convert to Anarchism during his incarceration. At one time he was also one of the "Marion Brothers" who were political prisoners held in the infamous Control Unit in Marion (IL.) federal prison, at that time the most secure prison in North America. Ultimately, this association and the resulting international notoriety on his case is what helped him to get out. Millions of people heard about the injustice of his case. He had served almost 15 years (1969-1983) before an international defence campaign won his freedom.



Since his release, he has worked as a community organiser in Chattanooga, and he is the past President of the Concerned Citizens for Justice, a local group fighting racism and police brutality. He is the author of "Anarchism and the Black Revolution", and the forthcoming autobiography "Years of Struggle, Years of Death", as well as a co-founder of the journal "Black Autonomy".

## PUBLIC MEETING

**LORENZO KOM'BOA ERVIN  
FORMER BLACK PANTHER, GRASSROOTS  
ACTIVIST AND AUTHOR OF "ANARCHISM  
AND THE BLACK REVOLUTION"**

**WILL BE SPEAKING IN  
'THE PLACE',  
LOWER DONEGALL STREET PLACE  
( BEHIND THE CENTRE FOR THE  
UNEMPLOYED)  
BELFAST  
SUNDAY 3rd MARCH 4.30PM**

*Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin's book "Anarchism and the Black Revolution" is now available from our bookservice at £5.95 plus 10% P&P. See page 13 for more details.*

# Bloody Sunday Commemoration Time To Decommission Injustice

The 24th commemoration of Bloody Sunday takes place this Sunday 28th of January.

The campaign to prove the innocence of the 14 civil rights demonstrators, shot dead by British paratroopers on Derry's streets on Sunday 30th of January 1972, was boosted recently with the discovery of a confidential letter which effectively proves that a cover-up took place as regards what really took place. The letter, which originated from 10 Downing Street, was discovered by the Britain/Ireland Watch civil rights group in the Public Records Office in London, gives details of a meeting between then Prime Minister, Edward Heath, and Lord Chief Justice Widgery, who headed the establishment cover up of Bloody Sunday.

Reference was made in the document to the 'propaganda war' being fought in the north, with Widgery referring to the marchers on 31st of January as "the other side".

The Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, made up of relatives of the dead men, has called for the release of all files relating to Bloody Sunday to be handed over to their team of legal advisors.

Leading up to this years commemoration John McKinney, a relative of one of those shot dead on Bloody Sunday appealed for a large turn-out for this years march. Speaking, on Tuesday 23rd January, at a Press Conference in the Conway Mill on Belfast's Falls Road Mr. McKinney, whose 26 year old brother William was shot by the paras, said:

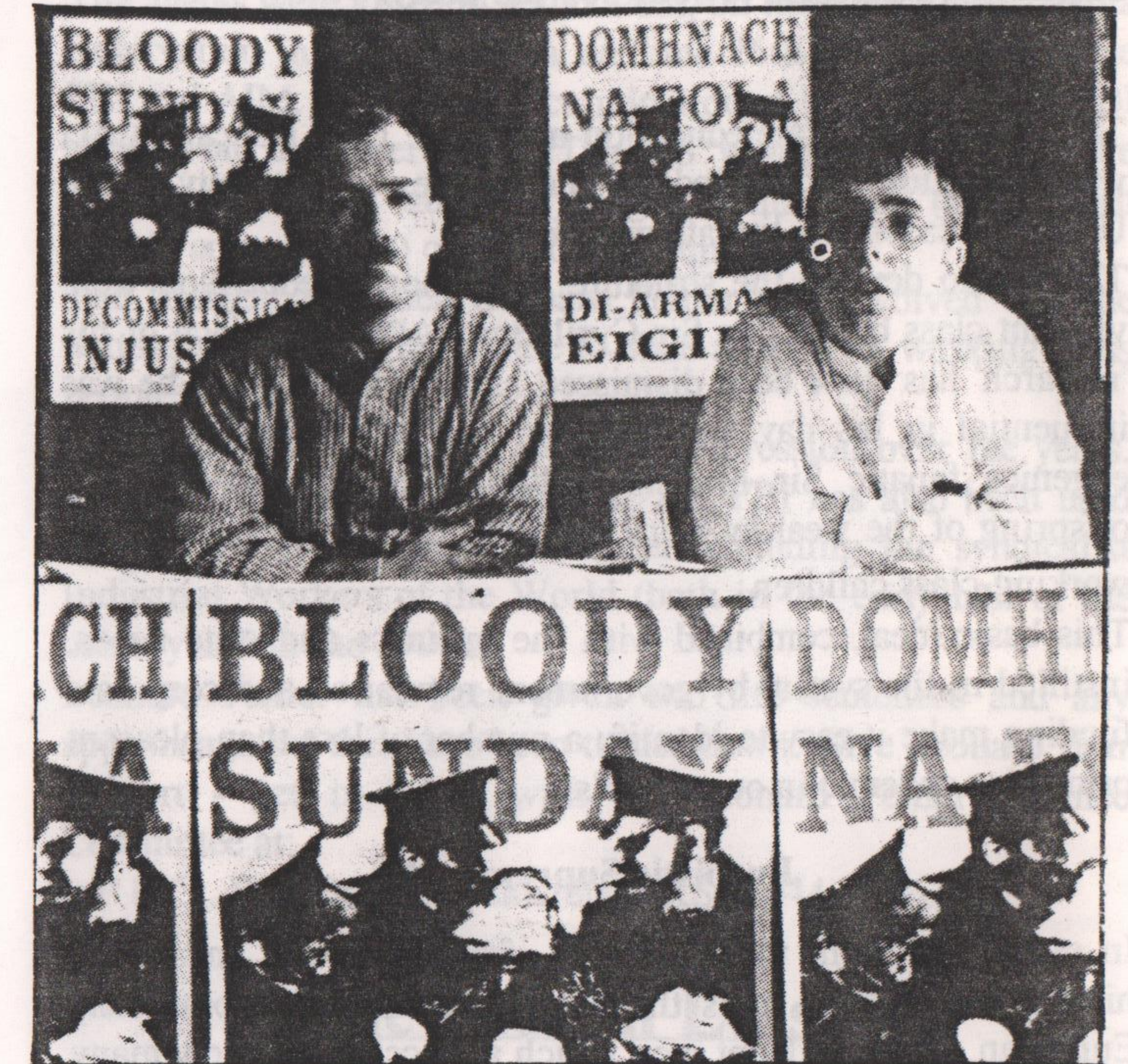
"We want people to be there not only to remember the dead, but to demonstrate in favour of the decommissioning of injustice".

He went on to say that:

"The Bloody Sunday march in Derry this Sunday is about remembering those who were killed, reflecting on the enormity of the occasion for us all and demanding that Britain starts decommissioning all the wrongs that it has been responsible for, both past and present. People should make it their business to come to Derry this week to register their outrage at the British government and its attempts to stall the peace process and to demand to live in a fair and just society."

Everyone interested in justice and opposing tyranny should lend their support to the relatives and supporters active in the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, and join the march in Derry. State violence should be exposed and opposed at every opportunity. We believe that the only real way to 'decommission injustice' is to 'decommission the state' (see article on page 12), and the only truly fair and just society is one which we the working-class control directly, in order to meet our own needs and not those of any parasitic capitalist class, and without the need for government. The words of the French predecessor of Anarchism J. Proudhon, although first spoken in 1848, are as true today as then:

**"To be governed is to be watched, inspected, spied on, regulated, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, ruled, censored by persons who have neither wisdom nor virtue."**



John McKinney, whose brother William was shot dead by Paras on Bloody Sunday, with a member of the Bloody Sunday Justice campaign speaking at the Press Conference at the Conway Mill.

## Anti-Traveller Racism In West Belfast

Anti-Traveller racism is rife through-out Ireland and West Belfast is certainly no exception.

Many local pubs and clubs still operate a completely unacceptable 'No Travellers' policy. It recently emerged, in a report in the *Andersonstown News* that young engaged couples from Traveller communities are barred from using any local pubs and clubs for their wedding receptions.

Mrs Brigid McDonagh from the Windy Gap Travellers' site on the Monagh By-Pass told the local paper that her son Micheal had to put off his wedding while he and his partner try to find somewhere to hold the reception. Settled Dermott Hill man Peter Vallely stated in the *A/Town News*:

"The amount of anti-Traveller racism in West Belfast is quite frightening. There is a total ban on Travellers in all the big wedding reception venues and thats completely unacceptable... because its Travellers it seems that nobody gives a damn."

The names of venues operating a ban on Travellers should become public knowledge, such pubs can and should be picketed and boycotted until they are forced to lift their racist policy. Local people, from both settled and Traveller communities should get together to hammer the message home that racism is unacceptable!



## Guest Article

The following guest article submitted by John Toomey of Belfast, was meant to appear in the last issue of 'Organise! the Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism'. We at 'Organise!' extend our apologies to John for the delay.

The extension of state education under the 1944 Education Act was a reaction to the needs of the business community in the UK for a reasonably literate workforce.

Those who devised the structure and ethos of education were virulent class bigots like Sir Cyril Burt. Although much of his 'research' has since been dismissed as pure fabrication, he was influential in his day and ascribed to the philosophy of the eugenics fanatic Sir Francis Galton who believed that the offspring of the wealthy were inherently more intelligent than working-class children.

This basic ideal, combined with the business and state needs, instilled in the system by government regulation and corporate funding make it easy to identify a number of less than pleasant principles endemic in our schools.

### Jingoistic Supremacy:

In every subject in the classroom, from literature and art to history and science, it is the achievements of predominately European, white, affluent men which are acclaimed (how many women artists, black writers or oriental scientists did you learn of in school?) with the endeavours of others being marginalised as implicitly inferior. This careful selection of material adds to the self serving world view peddled by the capitalist elite to generate internecine prejudice and hatred within local communities thus dividing the ordinary people and distracting us from the real enemy - the bosses.

### Conformity & an Irrational Attitude to Authority:

This aspect instils in children the uncritical belief in whatever distorted framing of a topic is taught to them by anyone with an interesting dress sense, a nice accent and, crucially, the ability to reward or punish them depending solely on the child's ability to regurgitate this received 'wisdom' on command. Conformity is further aided by school uniform and the general regimentation of school life. This need for conformity of thought and action is derived from the state's need to induce mental atrophy and a poor self image in the young, thus insuring they have neither the awareness nor the will to fundamentally challenge the capitalist order. (Note how historical events are personalised by the lauding of the carefully chosen, and packaged, few whilst ignoring the influence of the masses and their collective action).

It follows from this, unsurprisingly, that the middle ('professional') class who have passed through 3rd level education, are the most deeply indoctrinated sector of our

## School Days; They'll Teach You A Lesson

society. The class, with the greater privilege and function as cultural managers (teachers, social workers, local politicians, media hacks, etc.) actively participate in their communities so it is essential to the corporate state that this social activity does not threaten the system.

### Personal Ambition:

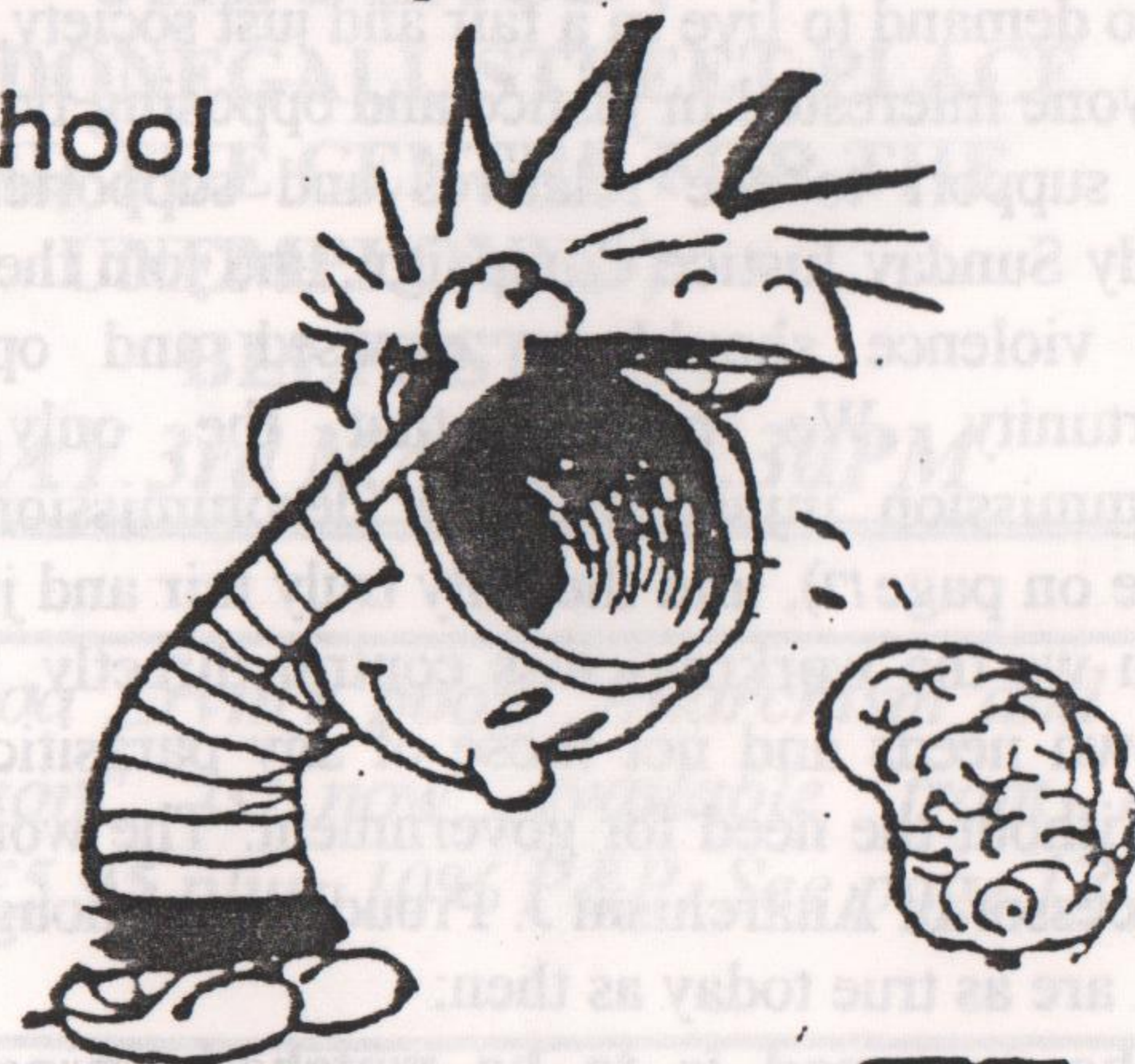
This promotes the inefficiency and amorality of a greed-based competitive culture to channel the frustration of the young (caused by inducing a poor self image) for the benefit of the market, further strengthening an isolationist mentality of 'looking after No. 1'. This erodes community cohesion and the effectiveness of community action; the old divide and rule trick writ large.

The result of this socio-ideological warfare on the young at the expense of real education (thorough teaching of the basics and the encouragement of intellectual development) is readily evident. In Britain today some 20% of school leavers are functionally illiterate, in the USA it is 50%.

However, it's a magnificent tribute to the intelligence and compassion of our species that even after a dozen or more years of this brainwashing that many ordinary, working-class people do see through the hype.

The successes in recent years of various environmental groups has further inspired people to realise that they can make a difference. Increasingly when the warped and bloody hand of capitalism is exposed many people no longer say: "I can't do anything, I'm only one person." Instead they are declaring: "I can do something, I'm one MORE person."

Go To School



Leave your brain  
at the door

## International News

### C.R.A.S. Congress in Moscow

On the 5th of August 1995, the founding congress of the Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists - Friends of the IWA (CRAS) took place in Moscow. The CRAS is a social revolutionary working peoples organisation in the ex-'Soviet Union'.

Following the "aims, programmatical and organisational principles of the anarcho-syndicalist International, the IWA." They have applied for affiliation to that international as its euro-siberian section.

As anarcho-syndicalists the CRAS "rejects all kinds of state, party, capitalist and 'state socialist' ideology and tactics; it uses only methods of self organisation and direct action."

The CRAS was founded by several anarchist groups from Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. Its formation is a major step forward for anarcho-syndicalism both in the ex-USSR and world-wide.

### Oppression of Greek Anarchist & Anti- Authoritarian Movement

In Greece, anarchists have been taking part in what amounts to armed clashes with state forces. The anarchist and 'anti-authoritarian' movement there has been at the receiving end of police attacks, frame-ups and arrests. Among the worst attacks took place on November 17th when 1700 people were forced to take refuge in the University of Athens because of Police use of chemical weapons. Doctors and ambulances wishing to attend to the injured inside were refused entrance.

The police had been banned from entering the University in 1974, following Polytechnic uprisings in which many were killed. On this occasion they stormed the building, arresting 504 people and charging 136. House raids followed. On the day of the arrests over 1000 people marched in Athens.

Our Greek comrades will keep on resisting and fighting back against state oppression, they issued the following defiant statement:

**"We will continue to fight state terrorism.  
We will resist the evolution of neo-liberalism.  
We will resist media lies.**

**We will resist the lifting of the University asylum.  
We demand immediate liberation of all social fighters.  
We will not take this lying down, we will face up to them."**  
Greek anarchists have sent out a call for international solidarity, you can contact them with messages of support at Radio Utopia - (fax) 031-207043 & Radio Kirotos - (fax) 031-245962.

## Leonard Peltier Support Network.

Leonard Peltier is a Chippewa/Lakota American Indian Movement (AIM) activist and pipe carrier who was framed on charges of killing two FBI agents.

The agents were killed in a shoot out, on the Pine Ridge Lakota Reservation in South Dakota on June 26th 1975, between the FBI and AIM. This was the culmination of several years of FBI attacks on the reservation. The US government wanted the American Indians off Pine Ridge so that they (along with certain corporations) could mine for uranium.

The firefight in which Leonard Peltier was involved was the natural outcome of resistance to state attacks on working-class people.

AIM has been the subject of severe repression over the years, with the FBI leading the attacks. The FBI has also been used against numerous other movements including the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (both in the early half of the century and in the 1990's).

Leonard Peltier has been given two life sentences and any appeals against this have been turned down. Give Leonard your support - get in touch with the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee at:

L.P.D.C., P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, KS 66044, USA.

## The French Lesson

A conservative government comes to power. They declare that its time to make the national economy more hospitable to business, so they move towards austerity (perhaps the French government needed to save money to set off more nuclear weapons in the Pacific). Health care, benefits and pensions for senior citizens are slated for cuts. Public service workers are the first to feel the bite.

Sounds familiar? It's happening in this country, as well as in France. But something happens in one place that's different.

What's different is that public service workers and their allies in France take to the streets. 150,000 demonstrate in Paris, another 100,000 demonstrate in Marseilles. They strike and bring the cities to a virtual halt.

So why not here? Partly because the unions here have become beholden to the state, too used to begging instead of demanding. Partly because the sense of militancy the French workers are showing today has been overwhelmed by the self-serving posturing of our so-called leaders, whose big salaries and bigger ambitions don't allow for actions like those being taken in France. Partly because the French workers have a real sense of history of their class and the struggles it has waged, while many Irish workers are unaware of our own rich history. Partly because we have become too afraid of the laws and the rules of behaviour set by the bosses to take matters into our own hands.

We need to go beyond the constraints of bureaucracy and timidity imposed by the bosses, as the French workers have done, and rebuild our movement from the bottom up. We need to seek new forms of organisation, based on direct democracy and collective decision making. We need to develop bolder and more innovative forms of fighting back. Further, we need a vision of society in which power, profit and privilege are a thing of the past.

In this way we can all share the 'French Lesson'.

## 'Ideas & Action'

The Worker Solidarity Alliance (the American section of the International Workers Association) are to relaunch their paper 'Ideas and Action' in the near future. If you'd like to reserve yourself a copy drop them a line at:  
WSA-IWA, 339 Lafayette St., Room 202, New York, NY 10012, USA.



## Direct Action



Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists often talk about 'Direct Action'. By this we simply mean that the best way for working class people to defend themselves from capitalism and the state, and ultimately go on the offensive against both, is through struggles which they control themselves. Experience after bitter experience has surely shown us that we cannot rely on professional middlemen, trade union bureaucrats or politicians to do our fighting for us.

Direct Action is always most effective when it is based on the economic strength of the working-class, but it can take many forms and prove effective at many levels. In short it encompasses 'every method of immediate warfare by the working-class against their economic and political oppressors' (1).

This article is the first in a series on different forms of Direct Action and looking at their effectiveness as weapons in the class war past, and present, as well as arguing that such methods must become the basis of any future movement for the emancipation of the working class.

Among the forms of Direct Action looked at will be the Strike, the boycott, sabotage in its many forms and the General or Social Strike.

### 'Labor's Natural Weapon'

The strike is traditionally seen as the 'weapon' of the trade union movement, although for modern day union bureaucrats it is a last resort and best avoided at all costs. The strike is the organised refusal to work. It is an indispensable means of defending and raising the standards of living and of ultimately going on the offensive against the employers. With the onset of the industrial revolution, as workers realised that they could improve their conditions through strength of numbers, the trade union movement was born. Along with it developed the strike, which was seen as, and which many continue to see as, 'Labor's natural Weapon'. In the words of the IWW, (Industrial Workers of the World an American industrial union most active in the early part of the 20th century):

"The logic is simple. If wages are too low to meet the needs of life, if the hours of labour are too long or working conditions intolerable, the thing to do is not call some witch-doctor of a politician, but simply quit work in sufficient numbers and with sufficient solidarity to force a shut down of operations until the evils are remedied."(2).



### Early Trade Unionism to the ITGWU

In Ireland, as in the rest of Europe, it was the eighteenth century which saw the birth of the trade union movement. Due to the illegality of the early unions it is difficult to get a clear picture of their activities, up until 1824 trade unions were illegal and membership of one carried, in Ireland, a 6 month sentence. Despite their necessarily 'underground' nature various records do provide an insight into their activities and the attempts of employers and both national and local government to crush them.

But it was the influence of syndicalist ideas on the Irish trade union movement which brought strike action by workers to new levels of militancy. The Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) was formed in 1908 "with the explicit ambition to decolonise Irish trade unionism"(3). The ITGWU was an industrial union in which the growing syndicalist influence found its strongest Irish expression. The two personalities most associated with this, Larkin and Connolly, both had close ties with the American IWW.

Strikes started to incorporate more generalised action. The ITGWU established a name for itself as an aggressive defender of workers and as a union which refused to make shoddy deals with the bosses. Between 1911 and 1913 they won many significant victories largely due to their uncompromising use of strike, and sympathetic strike, action.

Worried bosses banded together around one William Martin Murphy (owner of the Irish Independent & the Dublin Tramways Company) in the Employers Federation, in order to crush the ITGWU. It was these employers who instigated the Dublin Lock-Out of 1913. The Lock-Out, and its devastating outcome for the workers, is has been seen by many as the historic defeat of the ITGWU, insofar as they believed it tamed the militancy of the union, but this militancy had only been temporarily subdued.

In the post-war period workers growing unrest saw industry wide disputes increase in frequency, the general local strike emerged as an effective weapon in the workers arsenal in smaller towns, between 1918 and 1922 Ireland was to experience a total of four general strikes.

### A Weapon Against Sectarianism

In the north, prior to and since partition it has been industrial struggle, as opposed to 'abstract politics', which has succeeded in uniting workers across the sectarian divide. Workers have come together to fight for better pay and conditions, union recognition, against unemployment, in opposition to all too numerous attacks on those 'rights' previously won, and against sectarianism itself. In short, in periods of struggle, where class interests prevail, sectarianism can and has been greatly weakened. Unity of action through the use of the strike provide some of the most powerful examples of this.

In 1907 Larkin, as an organiser for the British based National Union of Dock Labourers, recruited large numbers of protestant and catholic Dockers. In April and May minor strikes broke out over union membership, the Shipping Federation reacted by locking out workers and bringing in scabs. This led to an all out strike with 3500 on strike pay by late July. Warships were brought into Belfast Lough and 500 soldiers were deployed to protect the imported scabs. Strike meetings were held up to three times a day often attracting up to 10,000 workers. On the 26th July 200,000 workers marched through the city, including along the Falls and Shankill roads. Such was the strength of militancy that the RIC, who were stretched to the full by the strike, mutinied. That August saw serious rioting in Belfast which saw catholic and protestant workers united in battle with the RIC who mutiny had collapsed. The officials of the NUDL however negotiated shoddy deals with the bosses and helped bring about the defeat of the strike.

1919 saw engineering and shipyard workers united unofficial in strike action, alongside workers in Glasgow, determined to win a reduction of the working week to 44 hours. Some 40,000 catholic and protestant workers were directly involved in the strike, another 20,000 were indirectly involved.

1933 saw railway workers unite to oppose a planned 15% wage cut. A GNR bus which made it to Dublin was burnt by a crowd sympathetic to the mainly protestant strikers. Worker returned to work on 6th April having reduced the wage cut to half that intended by the bosses

During the second world war mainly protestant workers again put class interests before loyalty to the crown. In April 1943 the Sunday Pictorial stated that in Northern Ireland, "The working-class were a disgrace to Britain and the Empire." Over the previous 9 months 3 million working days had been lost due to strike action. The two major strikes of this period were the Belfast factory strike of 1942 which workers fought until winning their demands (despite the roles played by the union leadership and the Communist Party) and the 1944 Engineers strike during which 5 shop stewards were arrested.

Unity of action by workers, catholic and protestant, is not only a historical matter, and it shows us that when class interests prevail the barriers of sectarianism fostered by the bosses and the states in Ireland could and can be overcome.

### The Reformist Trade Unions Today & Strike Action

The attitude to strike action of today's Trade Union movement is summed in the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union pamphlet, 'Whats a Trade Union Anyway?'. It states; "Strike action is very much a last resort taken reluctantly after much consideration"(4).

Consensus is the name of the game as far as the Trade Union leadership is concerned, with token half hours of action and one day strikes providing just the empty threat of action. At a time when Capital is launching an all out offensive the union leaderships fail to recognise it even exists!

The leadership of ICTU claim that the "technological revolution" has created "a new economic system", a system of 'partnership' in which employers and employees interests are magically reconciled, usually in the 'national interest' - following the logic of this there shouldn't be the need for industrial action. This 'reasoning' shows that union leaders are as removed from reality as they are from their membership.

Despite these attitudes, and vast new restrictive legislation, workers have still resorted to strike action when pressed, with or without union backing. Recent official and unofficial strike action such as the Postal Workers strikes across Scotland before Christmas and the ongoing Liverpool Dockers strike, provide inspirational examples of workers increasingly taking things into their own hands.

The eighties and nineties saw examples of class unity in the north. The working-class communities of the Falls and Shankill roads came together against the running down of the RVH, this was seen in the eighties when mainly protestant workers from the docks joined mainly catholic workers from the Royal to defend their hospitals, such unity has continued. Threats to catholic DHSS, health and housing workers were made by the UDA in the mid-eighties. In Lisburn all 124 DHSS workers immediately walked out. The next day 2,00 workers in another 12 offices joined in and the following morning 14 offices were shut, catholics and protestants stood together as workers against the threats. The strikes were organised without any lead from the union officials. Workers in general came together across the province against the introduction of Trust Status. Mainly protestant workers at the Hyster factory in Lurgan staged a walk out after the loyalist murders of three of their catholic workmates in '93. These are just some examples of the use of strike action in defence of working-class interests and against sectarianism.

### Irregular Warfare

Despite the trade union leaderships many workers are all too aware that their interests and those of the bosses are at odds. Workers, despite the obstacles stacked against them still recognise that they must take action in defence of their jobs, their livelihoods, their communities etc. We must start to learn the lessons of our history and put those lessons into effect. Increasing numbers of workers are realising that the strike is indeed 'Labor's Natural Weapon', and they must use this weapon as effectively and ruthlessly as possible. Ultimately to make such action all the more effective we must, in the words of the *Torch*, a workers paper issued by Kilkenny workers' council in 1921, set about;

"the steady, patient knitting together of our forces for the irregular warfare of strikes."(5).

Footnotes: (1) Chapter 3 'Anarcho-Syndicalism', R. Rocker. (2) 'The General Strike for Industrial Freedom', R. Chaplin. (3) 'Syndicalism in Ireland 1917-1923', E. O'Connor. (4) 'Whats a Trade Union Anyway' commissioned for schools by Dundalk 11/11 Branch ATGWU. (5) 'The Torch' 1921.

# JOE HILL 1879 - 1915



### Workers of the world, awaken!

If the workers take a notion,  
They can stop all speeding trains;  
Every ship upon the ocean  
They can tie with mighty chains;  
Every wheel in the creation,  
Every mine and every mill,  
Fleets and armies of the nation,  
Will at their command stand still.

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!  
Fight for your own emancipation;  
Arise, ye slaves of every nation,  
In One Union Grand.

Our little ones for bread are crying;  
And millions are from hunger dying;  
The end the means is justifying,  
'Tis the final stand.

Joe Hill was murdered by the State in Salt Lake City November 19th 1915.